13 January 2021

PUBLIC NOTICE

CASE CLOSURE CONSIDERATION, UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK RELEASE, MR. GAS TEXACO, 40135 HIGHWAY 41, OAKHURST, MADERA COUNTY, RB CASE 5T20000202

To: Offsite Property Owners and Other Interested Persons

This letter is to inform interested parties of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board's (Central Valley Water Board) consideration of closing the subject case, and to request comments from interested parties regarding the proposed closure for the property at 40135 Highway 41, Oakhurst, Madera County (Site).

The Site is an operating service station. Three petroleum underground storage tanks (USTs) were removed in 1999. Analytical results of soil samples indicated elevated concentrations of gasoline constituents. Approximately 180 cubic yards of impacted soil from the source area were excavated and removed for disposal. From 1999 through 2015, multiple phases of Site investigation and remediation were conducted to determine the extent of and to remediate impacted soil and groundwater.

Seven shallow groundwater monitoring wells, three deep monitoring wells, seven soil vapor extraction (SVE) wells, seven air sparge (AS) wells, and five ozone injection wells were installed. SVE and AS remediation was conducted between March 2006 and April 2010, which reportedly removed 14,145 pounds of total petroleum hydrocarbons as gasoline (TPHg).

In February 2012, groundwater results indicated elevated concentrations of petroleum constituents. Groundwater chemical analyses data collected in April 2012 from background well MW-7, confirmed the presence of naturally occurring hexavalent chromium (Cr^{+6}), prior to operation of the ozone sparge unit (OSU). The average concentration was 0.39 µg/L, which is considered the baseline concentration. The action level for Cr^{+6} is 20% above baseline, a concentration of 0.47 µg/L.

From January 2014 through August 2015 an ozone sparge and SVE system removed approximately 714 pounds of TPHg. Groundwater beneath the Site and beneath adjacent properties was monitored from February 2001 through January 2020. Petroleum constituents in groundwater were indicated as exceeding the Department of Health Services drinking water maximum contaminant levels.

Historical analytical results indicate that constituents of concern (COCs), mainly TPHg, benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, xylenes (BTEX), methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE), hexavalent chromium (Cr^{+6}) and total chromium (Total Cr), have been present. Analytical results for onsite shallow groundwater monitoring wells MW-1 and MW-3, and offsite monitoring well MW-6, indicated elevated concentrations of petroleum constituents. Other shallow monitoring wells detected low levels of petroleum constituents, while samples from deeper monitoring wells indicated concentrations of petroleum constituents of low to non-detect.

On 2 January 2020, groundwater analytical results indicated concentrations of benzene in shallow well MW-1 at 19 µg/L and MW-3 at 11 µg/L, and was not detected exceeding the detection limits in any other wells. TPHg was detected in shallow wells MW-1, MW-3, and MW-6, at concentrations of 1,500 µg/L, 1,400 µg/L, and 48 µg/L, respectively, with MTBE in three shallow wells at concentrations ranging from 0.73 µg/L to 14 µg/L.

Hexavalent chromium (Cr^{+6}) was detected in shallow wells at concentrations from 0.023 µg/L to 0.57 µg/L, with highest concentrations in MW-7. MW-7 is an upgradient well and contained Cr^{+6} prior to the startup of ozone injection. The Action Level for Cr^{+6} is 0.47 µg/L for compliance wells. Analytical results indicated concentrations of Cr^{+6} in two of three deep wells at concentrations from 0.047 µg/L to 2.4 µg/L. No other petroleum constituents were detected in shallow and/or deep wells during this sampling event. The report stated that since deep well DW-1 with Cr^{+6} at 2.4 µg/L is located cross- gradient, and within a different aquifer from where ozone sparging was conducted, it is likely that the Cr^{+6} is naturally occurring. Additionally, monitoring well MW-7 is upgradient and that Cr^{+6} in this well is also considered naturally occurring.

The report stated that based on the analytical results for the January 2020 monitoring event, the extent of the COC have been delineated. The highest concentrations of COC appears to be in the vicinity of the former USTs (MW-1 and MW-3), with some appearing to have migrated downgradient to MW-6. Historically, the groundwater flow direction in the shallow aquifer was to south-southwest, and in the deep aquifer was south-southeast.

Drinking water for the area is supplied by the Hillview Water Company (Hillview). A Sensitive Receptor Survey, conducted in June 2020, identified one active on-site water supply well, one active off-site domestic supply well (at 40148 Highway 41), and three inactive supply wells (Pete's Well, Shopping Center Well and Hondo's Well) within 1,000 feet of the groundwater contaminant plume. The Fresno River and China Creek are approximately 200 feet south and 750 feet south of the Site, respectively.

The inactive Pete's Well, Shopping Center Well and Hondo's Well, located downgradient on adjacent properties, had detections of gasoline constituents in the past, and were sampled from March 2001 through December 2016. The onsite well was also sampled intermittently from March 2001 through December 2017. Historical analytical results of the groundwater samples from the onsite well indicated MTBE as high as 14 µg/L in December 2001; however, no COCs were detected exceeding the detection limit in samples since May 2009.

On 19 December 2018, a Hillview representative confirmed that drinking water is supplied to Pete's Place, Park View Shopping Center, and Auto Zone properties. A backflow prevention system is in place, and the power supply to the wells has been disconnected. However, the Mr. Gas Oakhurst Site is not currently connected to the Hillview system.

On 28 June 2020, a groundwater sample was collected from a private off-site domestic well at 40148 Highway 41, approximately 200 feet northeast of the Site. Analytical results did not indicate petroleum constituents that exceeded reporting limits.

In a letter on 24 December 2020, the Site owner stated that until the water supply system is connected to the Hillview system, water from the onsite well will be used only for the operation of the carwash and the restrooms. Notices will be posted within the carwash and restrooms that the water is not to be used for drinking. Bottled water will be provided for consumption at the store operations.

Based on the most recent analytical results, the COC in most groundwater wells beneath the Site have been reduced, and the contaminant plume that exceeds water quality objectives is stable and decreasing in areal extent. It appears that the contaminant plume with elevated contaminant concentrations in groundwater beneath the Site is confined to the source area wells MW-1 and MW-3. Downgradient well MW-6, located on the shopping center property, historically contained TPHg as high as 1,500 µg/L and MTBE as high as 38 µg/L, but are reduced to 48 µg/L and 14 µg/L in January 2020, indicating that the groundwater plume is decreasing at the Site.

Central Valley Water Board Staff evaluated the case for closure based on the available information. The case meets seven of eight general criteria and two of the three media specific criteria contained in the Policy. However, case closure may be evaluated based upon the fundamental principles contained in the Policy, and a site-specific evaluation of developing water supplies in the area. The Site conditions do not meet the groundwater specific criteria 1 through 4 of the Policy because the nearest water supply well or surface water body is less than 250 feet from the defined plume boundary. The groundwater plume is less than 250 feet in length, there is no free product, and dissolved benzene and MTBE concentrations in groundwater are below 1,000 µg/L.

Central Valley Water Board Staff conclude that based on the historical petroleum constituent concentration in groundwater at the Site and surrounding supply wells, the case can be closed in accordance with the Policy's groundwater specific criteria 5.

Maximum concentrations in soil are less than those in the Policy Table 1 for commercial/industrial use, and do not exceed the concentration limits for a utility worker. The case meets Policy criterion 3a. The vapor intrusion to indoor air criteria is not required at an active fueling facilities. Site meets the exception for vapor intrusion to indoor air.

Based on the information available in case files and the Geotracker database, Central Valley Water Board Staff conclude that the Site meets closure criteria contained in the Policy. The contaminant plume in groundwater appears to be stable and/or decreasing.

Any remaining petroleum hydrocarbons at the Site should continue to naturally attenuate and not adversely impact environmental quality, the beneficial uses of groundwater, or pose an unacceptable risk to human health. All technically and economically feasible cleanup has been completed.

This public Notice has been transmitted to interested parties in the area, as well as posted on the Central Valley Water Board's Public Notices web page (http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/public_notices/), under Public Notice, Underground Storage Tank – Decisions Pending, & Case Closures.

You may participate in the case closure process by reviewing technical reports, asking questions, and providing comments on the proposed case closure. Details of the Site assessment are also available to interested parties through the State Water Board's GeoTracker website (http://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/).

The Central Valley Water Board case number is **5T20000202**. Information may also be reviewed at the Central Valley Water Board office at 1685 E Street, in Fresno, California.

Please submit comments regarding the proposed case closure to the Central Valley Water Board's Fresno office by **15 March 2021.**

Interested parties with questions or comments regarding the site or our proposed actions should contact the case worker, Khalid Durrani, at the above address, at (559) 445-6191 or by email Khalid.Durrani@waterboards.ca.gov.

Upon completion of the public comment period, and in the absence of substantive comment against closure being granted, Central Valley Water Board staff will proceed with the closure process for the case.